# The Soul of Sindh:

## New Research in Historical Context

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# Roopa Mari — A Timeless Symbol of Love, Valor, and Sacrifice

**Ruk Sindhi**

## A Gift of Love That Became a Monument of Courage

Along the riverbanks and sand dunes of Sindh, there are places that are more than mere ruins of stone and brick — they are eternal memorials of love, loyalty, bravery, and sacrifice. One such place is Roopa Mari, a palace built as a token of a king’s love, which over time

became a symbol of unwavering resolve and sacrifice.

Located about 26 miles south of Badin city, King Bhongar of the powerful Soomra dynasty built this magnificent palace on the banks of Kunr Sar for his beloved queen Roopa Rani. Named after her, the palace became known as Roopa Mari. It was not just a royal residence — it was the center of governance, a venue for coronations, and even served as the capital of Sindh.

## A Chapter of Heroism in the Pages of History

After King Bhongar’s death in 1288 CE, his son Chansar ascended the throne, while his loyal brother Dodo Soomro ruled from Vagha Kot. Despite political tensions and power struggles, Roopa Mari remained a symbol of royal grandeur — until history took a turn where love and patriotism were both tested by sacrifice.

In 1299 CE, the Mughal army invaded Sindh from two directions — one force from Bukkur, the other from Nagarparkar. Sindh’s brave warriors resisted in small battalions, but the overwhelming strength of the enemy gradually pushed them back. Many tribal leaders fled with

## The Final Sacrifice — A Vow to Protect Honor

Dodo Soomro, entrusted with the queen’s protection, chose to fight till his last breath rather than abandon Roopa Mari. In 1300 CE, as enemy forces reached the palace gates, Dodo was martyred near the women’s quarters. Seeing her brother’s bloodied body, Chansar was stirred with rage and joined the battle — only to be martyred as well.

After Dodo’s martyrdom, Roopa Rani made her final decision — she embraced the flames and perished with the palace, choosing death over dishonor. Today, Dodo’s grave lies near Roopa Mari, while

Roopa Rani’s shrine stands a short distance away.

Roopa Mari was built in 640 AH and destroyed in 700 AH, but its stones, walls, and the legends tied to it still echo through Sindh’s history as a metaphor for love and sacrifice for the homeland.

## A Living Tradition

Every year on 14th Phagan (early February), a fair is held at Roopa Mari, where people gather to honor the martyrs — keeping history alive through remembrance and reverence.

## A Message Beyond Time

Roopa Mari teaches us that love is not just emotion — it is sacrifice. It reminds us that giving one’s life for the honor of the homeland is a badge of pride, and that preserving history is a sacred duty.

# Pakistan’s Civilizational Foundation — The Identity of the Indus Valley

**Ruk Sindhi**

The territory we now call Pakistan is far more than a modern nation-state carved out in 1947. It is the inheritor of a civilizational legacy that predates political boundaries, religious identities,

and colonial frontiers. The true essence of Pakistan — its historical depth, its cultural soul, its foundational identity — is rooted in the civilization of the Indus Valley. Counted among the world's earliest and most sophisticated urban cultures, the Indus Valley Civilization contributed to humanity knowledge, urban planning, artistic expression, and a vision of social organization that emphasized order, creativity, and unity.

## Historical Continuities

The historical narrative of Pakistan cannot begin with Partition alone. It stretches back thousands of years, to an era when cities like Mohenjo-daro and Harappa flourished as vibrant centers of urban life. Here, some of the earliest experiments in writing, standardized weights and measures, planned architecture, and water management systems emerged, marking the Indus Valley as a cradle of civilization comparable to Mesopotamia and Ancient Egypt.

The geographical expanse of Sindh’s cultural domain was historically vast. At its zenith, it encompassed much of present-day Pakistan as well as Kutch, Kathiawar, Gujarat, and Rajasthan. This expansive reach reflects how deeply embedded the ethos of Sindh was in shaping the broader cultural and social fabric of South Asia.

## Indigenous Identity and Cultural Inheritance

The people of the Indus Valley were not outsiders who migrated from distant lands; they were native to this soil. For millennia, communities here evolved their own languages, crafts, agricultural practices, and cultural traditions. The Sindhi-speaking people, in particular, embody this continuity — a lineage that has endured on the banks of the Indus for countless generations.

These inheritors of the Indus legacy still dwell within Pakistan’s boundaries today. Beyond ethnic, linguistic, or sectarian divisions, their shared cultural identity and historical memory bind them

together. Their heritage is neither foreign nor imported — it is deeply indigenous, shaped by the rhythms of the Indus itself.

## The Message of Unity

From Kashmir to Karachi, traces of a common cultural thread can be discerned. The spirit of the Indus Valley — its emphasis on organization, creativity, and harmony — remains a unifying force. National identity, therefore, is not a recent invention but an echo of an ancient civilization that nurtured collective life long before the drawing of modern borders.

The true heirs of Pakistan are those who have lived on this land for centuries: those who cultivated its fields, gave voice to its languages, preserved its traditions, and kept alive its civilizational memory.

## Conclusion — A Call to Reimagine Identity

At this juncture, it is imperative that we look beyond narrow political or purely religious frameworks in defining ourselves. Pakistan’s identity must be understood through its deeper civilizational and historical roots.

To embrace the Indus Valley Civilization as Pakistan’s foundational heritage is to acknowledge a unifying past that transcends divisions. It is this legacy that can present Pakistan to the world not only as a modern state but as the inheritor of one of humanity’s oldest and most enlightened civilizations — ancient, cultured, and dignified.

# When the Afghan Monarch Kidnapped Sindh’s Prime Minister

**By: Ruk Sindhi**

## Abstract

This article examines one of the most striking political episodes in early nineteenth-century Sindh — the abduction of the Prime Minister of Sindh, Nawab Wali Muhammad Khan Laghari, by the Afghan ruler Shah Shuja Durrani. Situating the incident within the geopolitical turbulence of the Indian subcontinent and Central Asia, it explores the Afghan-Sindh interactions, Shah Shuja’s ambitions, and the socio-political consequences of his actions. Drawing upon contemporary accounts, this essay highlights the intersection of

personal ambition, regional politics, and the vulnerabilities of a fragmented polity.

## Introduction

The early nineteenth century was a period of intense political flux across South and Central Asia. The Mughal Empire had collapsed into irrelevance, the Marathas had been subdued, and the British East India Company was steadily expanding its control. Amidst this shifting balance of power, Sindh — then under Talpur rule — found itself caught between regional powers eager to exploit its strategic and economic potential.

Among these was Shah Shuja Durrani, an exiled Afghan monarch whose repeated incursions into Sindh left a deep imprint on the region’s history. His most audacious act — the kidnapping of Sindh’s Prime Minister in 1810 — remains a vivid illustration of how personal ambition and political

opportunism could destabilize an entire state.

## Shah Shuja: Rise, Fall, and Ambition

Born on 4 November 1785, Shah Shuja was the grandson of Ahmad Shah Abdali, the founder of the Durrani Empire. He first ascended the Afghan throne in 1803, only to be dethroned in 1809. After years of political exile, he regained the throne in 1839 with British support, ruling until his assassination in 1842.

Between his two reigns, Shah Shuja wandered through northern India and adjacent regions, living as both a fugitive and a political schemer. For him, Sindh — particularly the commercially vibrant city of Shikarpur — was both a source of revenue and a strategic outpost for any potential return to power in Kabul.

## Shikarpur: A Jewel of Commerce

In the early nineteenth century, Shikarpur was a commercial hub of international significance. Its merchant networks stretched to Central Asia, Persia, and northern India. Afghan influence over Shikarpur had persisted since the days of the Kalhoras, and its wealth made it an irresistible target for Shah Shuja.

His first recorded visit in 1806 saw him hosted in the Bagh-e-Shahzada (“Prince’s Garden”) with all the formal courtesies extended by the Talpur rulers. Yet, such hospitality was costly. Contemporary sources differ on the exact sum paid — some citing two million rupees, others one million — but all agree it was a substantial tribute extracted under political pressure.

## Tyranny in the Name of Authority

Contemporary chronicler Munshi Ata Muhammad depicts Shah Shuja’s conduct in Shikarpur as predatory:

“Wherever he found a wealthy man, he descended upon him like a moth to a flame, seizing his riches. Wherever he heard of a beautiful maiden, he would forcibly bring her into his harem.”

Accounts speak of arbitrary seizure of wealth, forced marriages, and acts of violence against those who resisted. Shah Shuja’s brief stays were marked not by diplomacy, but by calculated exploitation of the city’s resources and its elite.

## The Kidnapping of the Prime Minister (1810)

In 1810, when the Talpur rulers withheld further tribute, Shah Shuja launched another expedition into Shikarpur. This time, he escalated matters by abducting Nawab Wali Muhammad Khan Laghari, the Prime Minister of Sindh.

This brazen act was not merely a personal affront to the Talpur court but a strategic demonstration of Afghan leverage over Sindh’s political affairs.

The incident created a crisis that could not be resolved through force alone; negotiations were inevitable.

Ultimately, the Talpurs secured the Prime Minister’s release by offering lavish gifts alongside a tribute of two million rupees. Shah Shuja then withdrew to Kabul, but the psychological and political message of his actions reverberated long after his departure.

## Continuing Afghan Interference

Shah Shuja’s interference in Sindh did not end with this episode. Over the next three decades, he remained an unpredictable factor in regional politics, sometimes acting independently, at other times in alignment with broader Afghan or British objectives. His invasions and demands for tribute periodically disrupted Sindh’s governance and economy.

His eventual assassination in 1842 marked the end of his personal ambitions, but not the end of external

interference in Sindh — which, within a few years, would face British annexation.

## Conclusion

The episode of Shah Shuja’s abduction of Sindh’s Prime Minister illustrates the vulnerabilities of a state caught between larger powers and plagued by internal disunity. The Talpur rulers’ inability to present a united political front made Sindh susceptible to external manipulation and aggression.

In retrospect, this incident stands as both a historical curiosity and a cautionary tale: where political leadership is divided and reactive, foreign opportunists will find ample space to impose their will. Shah Shuja’s actions, though driven by personal ambition, thus became a microcosm of the geopolitical pressures that would ultimately engulf Sindh in the nineteenth century.

# The Rule of the Arghuns in Sindh: History, Resistance, and Cultural Alienation

**Ruk Sindhi**

## Introduction

Throughout the history of Sindh, several eras have profoundly impacted the region’s civilization, culture, and political autonomy. Among these, the Arghun, Tarkhan, and Mughal periods stand out—not for their duration, but for their enduring influence. The great Sufi poet of Sindh, Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai, symbolically expressed the alienation, oppression, and cultural suppression of these times. One of his poignant verses reflects the collective pain of Sindh:

“I met the Pathans, they understood not my tongue
I spoke in Sindhi, they responded in Persian
Even the scholars among them brought sorrow to the noble ones.”

This verse critiques the behavior of foreign rulers who, though they occupied Sindh, neither understood the Sindhi language nor the emotions and culture of its people. Shah Latif’s poetry encapsulates the anguish, cultural estrangement, and sense of subjugation experienced by the people of Sindh.

## Historical Background of the Arghun Dynasty

The lineage of the Arghun dynasty traces back to Genghis Khan. Zulnun Beg Arghun was appointed governor of Qandahar by Sultan Husayn Bayqara. After Zulnun was killed in battle against Shaybani Khan, his son Shah Beg Arghun was made governor of Qandahar. Later,

Shah Beg invaded Sindh and seized power from the last ruler of the Samma dynasty, Jam Feroz. Thus, in 1520 CE, the Arghun rule over Sindh began.

## The Story of Invasions and Occupation

### The Battle of Sibi (1485 CE)

The Arghuns attacked Sibi, a strategic border town of Sindh. Jam Nizamuddin ordered General Darya Khan to reclaim it. Darya Khan defeated the Arghuns and restored Sindh’s sovereignty. In this battle, Zulnun’s son Sultan Muhammad was killed.

## The Battle of Thatta (1520 CE)

After Jam Nizamuddin’s death, political instability gripped Sindh. Shah Beg Arghun exploited the situation and attacked Thatta. Darya Khan fought valiantly but was martyred. The Arghuns looted and burned Thatta for nine days. Later, upon the appeal of Qazi Qadan,

the violence ceased. A treaty was reached between Jam Feroz and Shah Beg, dividing Sindh into two regions: southern Sindh under Jam Feroz and northern Sindh under Shah Beg.

## Social, Cultural, and Political Impact of Arghun Rule

The Arghun regime deeply disrupted the social, cultural, and political fabric of Sindh:

Forts, villages, and wealth fell into the hands of foreign occupiers.

Refugees and power-seeking nobles from Khorasan destabilized Sindh’s peaceful environment.

The Sindhi language, traditions, and customs were disregarded.

The morale, intellect, and identity of the Sindhi people suffered greatly.

Shah Latif’s verse stands as a symbolic testament to this alienation and cultural oppression.

## Shah Hasan Arghun and the Tarkhan Era

After Shah Beg’s death, his son Shah Hasan Arghun ascended the throne. He conquered Multan and fortified the forts of Bukkur and Sehwan. Upon his death in 1555 CE, the Tarkhan dynasty took control of Sindh. Though the combined Arghun-Tarkhan rule lasted only 36 years, its effects lingered for centuries.

## Resistance and Sacrifice in Sindh

Darya Khan’s sons—Mahmud Khan, Motan Khan, and Jam Sarang—prepared to resist. In the Battle of Talti, the Sodho warriors displayed extraordinary bravery, though many were martyred. Shah Beg suppressed rebellions in Baghban,

Sehwan, and Bukkur, but never found peace in Sindh.

## The Tragedy of the “Bloody Tower”

In Bukkur, the Dhareja tribe rebelled. Mir Fazil and Sultan Mahmud crushed the uprising. Twenty-seven tribal leaders were executed on the spot, and the remaining were killed at night and thrown into the Indus River from a tower. That tower later came to be known as the “Bloody Tower.”

## Concluding Remarks

The brief rule of the Arghuns, Tarkhans, and Mughals left a lasting imprint on Sindh’s social, political, and cultural foundations. Shah Latif’s verse powerfully expresses the alienation, injustice, and erosion of Sindhi identity during this period. This chapter in Sindh’s history is one of subjugation,

resistance, and sacrifice—a legacy that must be remembered and understood even today.

# The Battle of Halani: The Decisive Struggle between the Kalhoras and the Talpurs

**Ruk Sindhi**

In 1783, a pivotal moment in Sindh’s history unfolded — the Battle of Halani — which brought an end to the century-old Kalhora dynasty and marked the rise of Talpur rule.

Following the assassination of the Kalhora ruler, Abdul Nabi Khan, Mir Fateh Ali Khan Talpur seized control of Sindh. The confrontation that sealed this transition took place in the town of Halani, located in present-day Naushahro Feroze district. This fierce battle would determine the political future of the region for decades to come.

## The Road to Conflict

Abdul Nabi Khan, the last significant ruler of the Kalhora dynasty, invited the Talpur chiefs to a mourning gathering for Imam Hussain (A.S) in Khudabad. Trusting his word, the Talpurs attended — only to be treacherously arrested and imprisoned.

This act of betrayal provoked Mir Fateh Ali Khan Talpur and his brothers to declare their resolve to overthrow the Kalhora regime. Both sides began preparing for war. The Kalhoras gained the support of Afghan forces, while the Talpurs rallied the Baloch tribes to their cause.

## The Battle of Halani

The opposing armies clashed at Halani in 1783. The fighting was intense and decisive. The Talpurs emerged victorious, ending Kalhora dominance in Sindh. Abdul Nabi Khan fled toward Talhar, but he was captured and killed soon afterward. With his fall, the Talpurs formally assumed the reins of power.

## Profiles of the Dynasties

The Kalhora Dynasty (1701–1783)
The Kalhoras began as spiritual leaders before transitioning into political rulers. Their first ruler, Yar Muhammad Kalhoro, initiated an era known for extensive canal construction, agricultural reforms, and patronage of Sufi saints. However, the dynasty's later years were marred by internal disputes, mismanagement, and cruelty, ultimately leading to their downfall.

The Talpur Dynasty (1783–1843)
Of Baloch origin, the Talpurs rose to power following their triumph at Halani. Under Mir Fateh Ali Khan Talpur's leadership, the dynasty ushered in administrative improvements, supported cultural development, and resisted foreign invasions. Their rule lasted until the British conquest of Sindh in 1843.

## Legacy of Halani

The Battle of Halani was more than a mere change of rulers — it symbolized the shifting political, tribal, and military alliances of Sindh in the late 18th

century. The Talpurs’ victory not only reshaped governance but also redefined the socio-political identity of the region for the next sixty years.

# The Sodha and Kohli Resistance in Thar: A Sixteen-Year Struggle Against British Imperialism

**Ruk Sindhi**

## Introduction

When the British East India Company invaded Sindh in 1843, their swift military victory over the Talpur rulers marked the beginning of colonial dominance in the region. Yet, far from the bustling towns along the Indus, the

arid expanse of the Thar Desert became the stage for one of the subcontinent’s longest and most determined episodes of resistance. The Sodha Rajputs and the Kohli community of Thar—led by warriors such as Rooplo Kohli, Rani Kiran Ji, and Ratan Singh Sodha—refused to bow to the new order.

For sixteen relentless years (1843–1859), this resistance was waged not by empires or trained battalions, but by desert clans whose courage, resourcefulness, and fierce sense of independence turned Thar into a thorn in the side of British imperial ambitions.

## Geography and Strategic Significance of Thar

The Thar Desert, stretching across present-day Sindh, Rajasthan, and Kutch, was more than just barren land. Its harsh terrain, scattered water sources, and labyrinth of sand dunes provided natural fortifications for those who knew it well. The Karoonjhar Hills—rising abruptly from the plains in Nagarparkar—served

as both sanctuary and fortress for local fighters. In such an environment, the British army’s technological superiority was often offset by the defenders’ intimate knowledge of the land.

## Background of British Occupation and Early Discontent

Following the annexation of Sindh, the British reorganized administrative control in Thar.

1844: Parkar and Kantho (including Mithi and Diplo) were placed under Rax, the Assistant Political Agent of Kutch. Thar-Garhi, Chhachhro, and Umerkot fell under the Deputy Collector of Mirpurkhas.

## Traditional rights of local chiefs were abolished.

Grazing taxes and revenue levies were imposed, stripping away both economic autonomy and political dignity.

For Thar’s Rajput rulers and Kohli chieftains, these changes were intolerable. In 1846, Ratan Singh Sodha led an armed rebellion, marking the first organized uprising in the desert against colonial authority. Although militarily inconclusive, the British eventually captured Ratan Singh through deception, executing him two decades later in 1866.

## The Rise of Rooplo Kohli and the Guerilla Campaign

The pivotal moment came on April 15, 1859, when Rooplo Kohli—a commander of remarkable tactical skill—declared open revolt against the British Empire.

He mobilized over 8,000 Kohli warriors, attacking government offices, burning administrative records, and raiding treasuries.

Three times, his forces defeated British detachments, employing hit-and-run tactics, surprise night raids, and strategic use of mountain passes.

In retaliation, Colonel Evans marched from Hyderabad with the Third Baluchi Regiment, artillery, and reinforcements. Still, Rooplo’s fighters held their ground for months.

## The Karoonjhar Stronghold and the Siege of Chandan Garh

Atop the Karoonjhar Hills stood Chandan Garh, a fort that symbolized the resistance. On May 3, 1859, British artillery destroyed its walls after an intense bombardment. Though scattered, Rooplo’s forces retreated into the desert, continuing their guerrilla campaign until late August.

## Other Leaders and Notable Acts of Bravery

The resistance was not confined to one man. Chiefs such as Rani Kiran Ji, Raja Ladhu Singh of Virawah, Bhupat Singh, and Udhi Singh Sodha played decisive roles.

Udhi Singh freed prisoners from British jails and launched a daring attack on Colonel Trott’s camp, forcing the officer to flee for his life.

Rani Kiran Ji became a symbol of defiance, evading capture for months before betrayal led to her arrest and exile to the Andaman Islands—known as “Kala Pani.”

## Betrayal and Aftermath

After five months of fierce resistance, Rooplo Kohli was captured. Refusing bribes and enduring threats, he never disclosed Kiran Ji’s location. Ultimately, local collaborators—Seth Mahao Ji Lohani and Hans Puri Bawi—betrayed the leaders, enabling the British to dismantle the network.
Lands belonging to resisting chiefs were confiscated, while collaborators were rewarded with property and agricultural revenues.

By August 1859, although the British secured control over Parkar, the desert

had exacted a heavy cost on their forces. With Rooplo Kohli’s execution, the armed phase of Thar’s independence movement came to an end.

## Legacy

The Sodhas, Kohlis, Bhils, and Khossos of Thar fought not for imperial ambition, but for dignity, autonomy, and the preservation of their way of life. Their story, rich with sacrifice and valor, occupies a golden chapter in South Asian resistance history.

Today, Rooplo Kohli’s name is etched into the collective memory of Sindh, celebrated as a martyr who chose death over submission. The Karoonjhar Hills still echo with his legend, reminding the world that even in the harshest deserts, the thirst for freedom cannot be quenched.

# The Battle of Khassai — Tales of Sindhi Resistance

**Ruk Sindhi**

The Battle of Khassai was fought between the people of Sindh and the occupying Arghun forces near the village of Khassai, in present-day District Jamshoro. This village holds special historical significance because close to it once stood the Otaaq (residence) of Sindh’s celebrated general, Doolah

Darya Khan. The remains of this residence, also known as Doolah Darya Khan’s Maari, can still be seen in a dilapidated state near the Gopang Railway Station.

In his book Ohi Deenhan Ohi Sheenh, Pir Ali Muhammad Rashdi mentions that whenever Doolah Darya Khan, the great commander of the Samma dynasty, traveled from Thatta (then the capital of Sindh) to his native village at Baghban Tilti, he would rest at this very residence. For this reason, the site became locally famous as his Otaaq.

## The Arghun Era

The Arghun dynasty ruled Sindh from 1520 to 1555 CE. Before them, Sindh had been governed by the independent Samma rulers, whose rule came to an end in 1520. After Shah Beg Arghun’s death, his son Mirza Shah Hasan Arghun ascended the throne of Sindh.

## Manjhand and the Khassai Region

Khassai is a historical village located in the Manjhand taluka of Jamshoro district. The town of Manjhand itself was destroyed twice by the floods of the Indus River and was rebuilt a third time at its present site.

In ancient times, because of its location on the banks of the Indus, Manjhand served as a vital trading hub, linked to the old maritime routes of the world. The merchants of Manjhand, known as the Sindh Workies, were famed internationally. Their trade reached Java, Sri Lanka, Gujarat, Rome, Iran, Iraq, Africa, and even Europe. The ancient town was filled with beautiful buildings and monuments.

Manjhand taluka is also home to the vast Ranikot Fort, spread across 32 kilometers, often called the Wall of Sindh. Today it stands as one of the most important sites for tourism and history.

This region also witnessed the martyrdom of Makhdoom Bilawal, who was crushed to death in an oil press on

the orders of the Arghuns. His follower, Syed Haider Sanai, likewise led fierce resistance against them. Just like the rest of Sindh, this land was a center of struggle against foreign invaders, where villagers from every settlement stood in defense of their homeland.

## The Battle at Khassai

At Khassai, Sindhi warriors fiercely resisted the Arghuns. After consolidating their control over Sindh, the Arghuns imposed heavy taxes, plundered villages, and seized lands, provoking the people to rise in revolt. The village of Khassai thus gained historical importance as a symbol of the Sindhi people’s refusal to accept slavery, choosing instead to sacrifice their lives for freedom.

In the early stages of the battle, the Sindhis fought bravely, inflicting defeat on the Arghuns and forcing them to retreat. However, at a critical moment, betrayal turned the tide. Despite the martyrdom of hundreds of Sindhi fighters, the battle ended in defeat.

## Betrayal and Local Memory

According to oral traditions, it was not an entire tribe or community that betrayed the Sindhi cause, but rather a handful of individuals who, for their personal gain, guided the Arghuns through secret routes. These betrayers were later ostracized by the rest of society, and their names were erased from collective memory.

## Sacrifices of the People

The followers of Doolah Darya Khan played a leading role in the battle, as his influence in the area was immense. Villagers from across the region — including Anarpur, Budhpur, Belo Anar, Amri, Manjhand, Bhoro Wah, Dabhri, Jhulo, Kachhi, Lakhri, Laki, Noorpur, Rajri, Sun, Thibbat, and many others — risked their lives for the defense of Sindh.

## Communities That Took Part

Among the major communities that resisted the Arghuns were the

Manjhandis, Bhambhros, Chachars, Gainchas, Khamaans, Korijas, Lākhas, and Rajris. The elders of these groups still recall the stories passed down from their ancestors, who told of the fierce resistance offered at Khassai. They fought with whatever weapons they had, though they lacked both military training and modern arms, while the Arghun army was well-equipped and disciplined. This imbalance caused heavy losses among the Sindhi fighters.

## Legacy

The Battle of Khassai remains etched in the memory of Sindh as a chapter of resistance, courage, and sacrifice. Though it ended in defeat, the bravery and martyrdom of the Sindhi fighters continue to inspire pride. Their legacy is a reminder that the people of Sindh chose death with dignity over the chains of slavery.

# The Arghun Invasions and the Tragedy of Multan: When People Were Forced to Eat Dogs and Cats

**Ruk Sindhi**

## Introduction

The history of Sindh and Multan is replete with accounts of foreign invasions. Every new conqueror sought not only political dominance but also the plunder of resources and the subjugation of local populations through terror and humiliation. One such chapter is the period of the Arghun dynasty. The reign

of Mirza Shah Hasan Arghun (1524–1555) was particularly disastrous for the people, marked by incessant warfare, mass killings, and destruction. The year-long siege of Multan remains one of the darkest episodes, where hunger and despair forced its citizens to consume dogs and cats for survival.

## The Rise of Shah Hasan Arghun

After the death of Shah Beg Arghun in 1524, his son Mirza Shah Hasan ascended the throne at Nasarpur. His rule, like that of his father, was fundamentally militaristic. He consolidated power by storming Thatta, driving Jam Feroz into exile, and subduing Badin and Kutch.

As Tārīkh-i-Masūmī records:

“The army of Mirza Shah Hasan marched upon Thatta and captured the city. Jam Feroz fled to Kutch, and thereafter the whole dominion of Sindh fell under the

Arghun rule.”
(Tārīkh-i-Masūmī, p. 112)

## Turning Towards Multan

Having secured his base in Bukkur, Shah Hasan turned his attention to Multan, then ruled by the weakened Langah dynasty. For the Arghuns, Multan was strategically and economically vital, both as a fertile territory and a military stronghold.

According to Tabaqāt-i-Akbarī:

“The ruler of Multan, Husain Langah, was young and weak, while real power lay in the hands of nobles and women. Shah Hasan Arghun seized the opportunity and laid siege to the fortress.”
(Tabaqāt-i-Akbarī, vol. II, p. 245)

## The Year-Long Siege of Multan

In late 1526, the Arghun forces encircled Multan. Despite repeated attempts by

Husain Langah to negotiate peace, Shah Hasan refused. The siege stretched on for an entire year.

Food supplies inside the city were exhausted.

People survived on herbs, bark, and thin gruel.

Finally, desperation drove them to consume the flesh of dogs and cats.

Tārīkh-i-Masūmī provides a harrowing account:

“Because of the siege, the inhabitants were reduced to wailing in hunger. Grain disappeared entirely. Even the flesh of dogs and cats was consumed as if it were ordinary meat.”
(Tārīkh-i-Masūmī, p. 118)

## The Fall of the Fortress and Massacre

On 15 January 1527, the Arghuns broke through the iron gates and entered the

fortress. What followed was twelve days of unchecked slaughter and plunder.

As described in Tabaqāt-i-Akbarī:

“When the gates were forced open, the army poured in. Neither men, women, nor children were spared. Even those who sought refuge in shrines and monasteries were dragged out and put to the sword.”
(Tabaqāt-i-Akbarī, vol. II, p. 247)

Every male between the ages of seven and seventy was seized, while Sultan Mahmud Langah’s son Hasan and daughter were captured—the daughter forced into a coerced marriage, adding further insult to the defeat of Multan.

## A Historical and Analytical Perspective

The tragedy of Multan, preserved in multiple historical sources, raises critical questions:

Could a stronger unity among the Sindhi and Multani tribes have resisted the Arghun advance?

Did internal divisions among local rulers enable the Arghuns to prevail so decisively?

Most importantly, why do ordinary people always become the ultimate victims of imperial power struggles?

Both Tārīkh-i-Masūmī and Tabaqāt-i-Akbarī concur in depicting the event as a human catastrophe rather than a mere military victory. Local traditions also remember it as a period of unimaginable hunger, humiliation, and devastation.

## Conclusion

The reign of Shah Hasan Arghun was defined by relentless campaigns, destruction, and cruelty. The year-long siege of Multan stands as a testament to the horrors inflicted upon ordinary people—where hunger compelled them

to eat animals they once cherished as companions.

This episode is not just a historical memory but a warning: when indigenous unity fractures and external domination prevails, it is always the common people who pay the heaviest price.

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# When Alexander the Great Hanged the Warrior King of the Machhi Tribe in Aror

**Ruk Sindhi**

## Introduction

Many conquerors have etched their names into the annals of world history, but none achieved victory in every land without resistance. The King of Macedonia, Alexander—known in the West as *Alexander the Great*—extended his empire from Iran, Egypt, Afghanistan, Punjab, and finally into Sindh during a brief 13-year military campaign. Yet when he entered the Indus Valley, the spirit of freedom and bravery among its people inflicted wounds that stayed with him until his final days.

## Alexander’s Invasion and the Sindh Context

Born in 356 BCE, Alexander advanced toward the Indus Valley in 326 BCE. While many rulers in Punjab submitted to him, valiant leaders like *Porus* chose to fight. The Greek historian *Plutarch* writes:

**“The fiercest warriors in Porus’s army were the Sindhi Khatris and the Malli tribe, who wounded Alexander and broke the morale of his troops.”**

In *Multan*, the Malli (Malhi) tribe confronted Alexander with 900 war elephants and thousands of foot soldiers. Alexander himself was severely wounded by an arrow in this battle.

## Resistance in Sindh

*Muhammad Ibrahim Joyo*, in his book *Shah, Sami and Sachal*, writes:

**“In 325 BCE, when Alexander entered Sindh, the Brahmins repeatedly urged the people to rise against the invader. There was a**

**hidden spiritual force in Sindh that kept the people's courage alive. It was this force that led the Sindhis to fight Alexander in every village and settlement."**

*Dr. Nabi Bakhsh Baloch* notes:

**"Wherever Alexander passed through Sindh, the locals fiercely resisted. The rulers of Sindh commanded an army of 200,000 infantry, 20,000 cavalry, and 4,000 war elephants. Such a formidable force made victory difficult for Alexander."**

## The King of the Machhi Tribe — A Symbol of Freedom

In *Alor* (Aror), the *Machhi tribe*—referred to by Greek historians as *Massicans*—stood against Alexander's army under the leadership of their brave king. This moment stands as a rare and noble example in Sindh's history, where a king personally led his forces and stood face-to-face with the enemy.

Hundreds of Alexander’s soldiers were killed in this battle. The Greek historian *Arrian* notes:

**“The resistance by the Massicans proved extremely damaging for Alexander.”**

However, due to a lack of modern weaponry and organized forces, the Machhi tribe was eventually defeated. The king was captured, and Alexander ordered that he be publicly hanged in the central square of his own capital, *Alor*, alongside the Brahmins.

This scene became an *immortal memory* in Sindh’s history—a king who gave his life for his homeland but refused to bow before Alexander.

## Resistance in Sehwan and by the Fisher folk

In *Sehwan*, Raja *Sambus* and the Brahmins led the people in battle. After his victory, Alexander ordered the execution of all Brahmins. On his return journey, the fisherfolk of *Manchar Lake* attacked his army with arrows and dogs,

during which Alexander was wounded once again.

## Testimonies from Historians

- **Plutarch**: “The Malli warriors in Porus’s army became the cause of death for Alexander’s men.”
- **H.T. Lambrick**: “The prolonged and bloody wars against Alexander show the deep passion for freedom among the Sindhis. Alexander did not find a moment of peace in Sindh.”
- **Robin Lane Fox**: “Porus made Alexander earn his respect, which is why Alexander honored him.”

## Conclusion

For Alexander the Great, Sindh proved to be a land of fire and resistance. The sacrifice of the Machhi tribe’s king, the revolutionary role of the Brahmins, the bravery of the Sindhi Khatris in Porus’s army, and the fisherfolk’s attack—all together reveal that the Sindhi people have never bowed before foreign invaders.

This historical episode is not merely a tale of the past—it is a *living symbol of freedom and patriotism*, one that continues to immortalize Sindh's heritage to this day.

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5. H.T. Lambrick, *Sindh: A General Introduction*
6. Robin Lane Fox, *Alexander the Great*

# Evolution of Modern Sindhi Castes from Rajput Lineage

## Ruk Sindhi

When we speak of Sindh, we must not limit it to its current geographical boundaries. Instead, we should view it in the context of the ancient Sindhu Valley Civilization, which encompassed the entire region of present-day Pakistan. This region was historically part of a unified cultural and civilizational landscape, and its communities share a common ancestry that cannot be separated.

## Ancient Tribes: Jat and Med

Texts like the Ramayana and Mahabharata mention tribes from Sindh, notably the Jats and Meds. The Jats were pastoralists who transported goods on camels, while the Meds lived along rivers

and the sea, engaging in fishing and sailing. Over time, the term "Jat" evolved into "Jut," and "Med" became "Meer Bahar" or "Mallah." These tribes are considered indigenous to the Sindhu Valley, with evidence of their existence dating back over 4,000 years.

## Samat Castes: Branches of Rajput Lineage

A question often arises: are Samat castes derived from the Sama tribe? Research shows that Samat castes actually originate from the Rajput lineage. The Rai dynasty, which ruled Sindh, belonged to the Rajput Sama clan. From this lineage, the Samat castes emerged, extending beyond Sindh into Punjab and other parts of Pakistan.

According to renowned historian Allah Rakhiu Butt, the Jat, Med, and Rajput-origin castes in Sindh are collectively known today as "Samat." The Sama rulers were originally Hindu Rajputs who converted to Islam in 1391 CE.

## Arrival of Arabs and Identity Shifts

During the Arab conquest, Sindh was inhabited by tribes such as Sama, Laka, Lohana, and Jat. Some converted to Islam, while others remained Hindu. The Chachnama records that Rajput Thakurs served in Raja Dahir’s army, and Rajput warriors were also part of the Somra and Sama forces. The Jareja clan, which claims descent from the Sama, established rule in Kutch, Bhuj, and Kathiawar. Some Jarejas remained Hindu, while others embraced Islam.

## Modern Castes and Their Origins

Allah Rakhiu Butt classifies Sindh’s modern castes into two groups: Samat and non-Samat. Non-Samat groups include Sayyids, Baloch, and Pathans, who have become deeply integrated into Sindhi society.

Jat Subgroups: Abro, Kalhora, Kokhar, Machhi, Palal, Tunya, Mallah

Samat Castes in Punjab: Awan, Sial, Kokhar, Ahir, Budha, Bhagat, Bhund, Bohar, Joya, Kamtiya, Masan, Samtiya, Suhag, Tiwana, Tatri, Tagar
Samat Castes in Sindh: Rathore, Panhwar, Barro, Sameja, Jokhio, Nomria, Thiba, Depar, Rajra, Mangria, Lark, Kathia, Mehr, Dher, Dharija

## Identity and Psychological Subjugation

After the Arab conquest, many local tribes began associating themselves with Arab lineage—Qureshi, Ansari, Hashmi, Siddiqui, Farooqi, Sayyid, Mughal, Pathan—often to gain favor or express religious devotion. Allah Rakhiu Butt calls this a form of psychological subjugation.

## For example:

Thahim Tribe: Sometimes claims Arab Tamimi or Baloch origin, though they are actually Samat Jamot.

Saraiki Castes: Migrated from Punjab during the Kalhora era, speak Jatki or Saraiki, and identify as Jat or Samat.

## Historical Continuity and Cultural Unity

Many modern Sindhi castes evolved from the ancient Jat and Rajput lineages of the Sindhu Valley. Today, they are known as "Jat" in Punjab and "Samat" in Sindh, but their ancestral roots are the same. The integration of various ethnic groups into Sindh’s social fabric is a natural historical process.

# A Research Review of Sindh’s Castes, Tribes, and National Identity

**Ruk Sindhi**

## Introduction

A nation’s identity, culture, and historical consciousness form the foundation of its collective psychology. When nations pass through periods of subjugation, a sense of inferiority emerges among their people, which deeply affects their national character. Sindh, one of the world’s oldest civilizations, has experienced such psychological crises across various historical eras. The purpose of this research article is to restore the identity of Sindh’s castes, tribes, and communities, to highlight their historical roots, and to cultivate a renewed sense of national pride.

## Subjugation, Inferiority Complex, and Foreign Influence

History bears witness that when nations fall under foreign rule, their people begin to perceive the conquerors as superior and themselves as inferior. Consequently, the conquered often adopt the conquerors’ culture, names, customs, and personal identities. The

Sindhi people, too, especially after British colonial rule, underwent such a transformation, where many tribes and communities abandoned their original identities and began to take pride in being associated with foreign names and lineages.

## Sindhi Civilization and Cultural Identity

The Sindhi people are heirs to the ancient Indus Valley Civilization. Their language, literature, culture, arts, and social values are rich and profound. Sindh’s are a peace-loving and constructive people, not known for conquest or exploitation. They respect women, live in harmony with other communities, and maintain a deep connection to their land. These qualities form the essence of their identity.

## The Trend of Changing Castes and Adopting Foreign Identities

In recent years, a growing trend has emerged in Sindh where some communities take pride in identifying with foreign castes or names. This trend is harmful to Sindh’s national identity. It reflects not only a lack of historical awareness but also a psychological inferiority. It is essential for Sindhi tribes to reclaim their original identities and proudly affirm their Sindhi heritage.

## Neglect by Historians and Distorted Narratives by Outsiders

Following British colonization, Sindhi writers and historians conducted limited research on the castes, tribes, and heroes of Sindh. This vacuum allowed foreign authors to manipulate the narrative. They attempted to portray Sindh’s brave tribes as non-Sindhi and distorted history based on fabricated traditions. As a result, many authentic Sindhi tribes today mistakenly associate themselves with other ethnic groups.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

The restoration of Sindhi identity is a pressing need of our time. This article offers the following recommendations:

Sindhi historians, writers, and researchers should conduct scholarly studies on Sindh’s castes, tribes, and communities.

Educational institutions, media, and cultural organizations should promote awareness of national identity.

The people of Sindh should share accurate information about their caste, tribe, and history to enrich the academic record.

Sindhi identity should be highlighted through vlogs, books, and documentary films.

## A Call to the Audience and Readers

Our land, our identity, and our civilization are sources of pride. Let us unite to restore our true identity and declare to the world with pride:
“We are Sindhi. We are the rightful heirs of this land!”

# The Rule of the Rai Dynasty in Sindh: A Tale of a Golden Era

## Ruk Sindhi

Historical chronicles record that Rai Diwaj was a magnificent ruler of Sindh. The kings of India respected and admired

him, and under the supervision of wise officials, the administration of the state was conducted in an exemplary manner. But who was Rai Diwaj, and which dynasty did he belong to? Today, we turn to the story of the illustrious Rai dynasty.

## The Rai Dynasty in Sindh

The Rai dynasty ruled Sindh from **450 CE to 642 CE**, a span of almost 192 years. This period is remembered as an era of **political stability, economic prosperity, peace, and religious tolerance**. During this time, there was neither internal strife nor sectarian hostility among the people of Sindh.

## Administration and Economy

The kingdom was divided into four provinces:

1. Multan
2. Uchh
3. Brahmanabad
4. Sehwan

Governors appointed by the Rai rulers administered these provinces. The capital was the city of **Aror**, the thriving heart of Sindh, while **Debal** served as its chief port, connecting Sindh to international trade routes. Buddhism was the state religion, and the subjects lived in prosperity and harmony.

## The Kings of the Rai Dynasty

Five rulers of the Rai dynasty governed Sindh:

1. Rai Diwaj (Diwaj/Diwaji)
2. Rai Sahiras I
3. Rai Sahasi I
4. Rai Sahiras II
5. Rai Sahasi II

Although historical sources differ slightly on their names and reigns, most historians agree on this sequence.

## Notable Events

- **Rai Diwaj** laid the foundation of a strong state.
- During the reign of **Rai Sahiras II**, the ruler of Nimruz launched an invasion. This led to the famous **Battle of Chains (Zaat al-Salasil)**, where Sindhi warriors fought with chains bound to their waists so none could retreat. Rai Sahiras II fell in battle but successfully defended Sindh from conquest.
- **Rai Sahasi II** reorganized the state. In his court, a brilliant Brahmin youth named **Chach** rose to prominence. After Rai Sahasi’s death, his widow Queen Sohañ Devi married Chach. Eventually, Chach consolidated power, suppressed revolts, and established the **Brahman dynasty**, bringing the Rai dynasty to an end.

## Legacy

The rule of the Rai dynasty stands out in Sindh’s history as a golden age marked

by **peace, prosperity, justice, and tolerance**. The ruins of **Aror**, along with the scattered forts and citadels across Sindh, remain enduring symbols of their grandeur.

# The Sindhi Tribes and Their Resistance Against Shah Beg Arghun

## Ruk Sindhi

## Introduction

The history of Sindh is marked by repeated invasions and the determined resistance of its people. Whenever foreign powers sought to subjugate the land, the Sindhi tribes rose in defense of their homeland, culture, and identity. In the early 16th century, Shah Beg Arghun invaded Sindh, defeated the last ruler of the Samma dynasty, Jam Feroz, and laid the foundations of Arghun rule.
Yet, the people of Sindh never accepted foreign domination wholeheartedly;

rather, they resisted fiercely at every front.

## Background of the Arghuns

Shah Beg Arghun, originally the governor of Qandahar, advanced towards Sindh in 1520. The Samma dynasty had grown weak, and the inefficiency of Jam Feroz created political turmoil. Seizing the opportunity, the Arghuns marched into Sindh.

## Tribal Resistance in Sindh

### *1. The Samma Tribe*

The Sammas were the bearers of Sindh’s independence. Jam Nizamuddin (Jam Nindo), through his commander Doolah Darya Khan, successfully repelled the Arghuns from Sibi in the late 15th century.

### *2. Doolah Darya Khan and His Army*

Doolah Darya Khan, remembered as a national hero of Sindh, fought valiantly against Shah Beg at Thatta in 1520. Though he fell as a martyr, his sacrifice

became a symbol of Sindh’s undying struggle for freedom.

### *3. The Sodha Tribe*

The Sodhas of Sehwan and its surroundings displayed extraordinary courage in the Battle of Tatta and later at Talthi. Mir Masum Bakhri records in *Tarikh-i-Masumi* that the Sodhas fought with unmatched valor, and many warriors, including Ranmal Sodha, embraced martyrdom.

### *4. The Sahta Tribe*

The Sahtas too refused to acknowledge Arghun authority, resisting fiercely in the regions around Sehwan.

### *5. The Sons of Doolah Darya Khan*

His sons — Mian Mahmood, Motan Khan, and Jam Sarang — carried forward their father’s legacy, engaging the Arghuns in the battles of Talthi and Baghban.

### *6. The Machhi Tribes*

The Machhis resisted Arghun forces in the Baghban region, defending their settlements with determination.

### *7. The Dher, Dhareja, and Mehr Tribes*

In the fortress of Bukkur, these tribes offered stiff resistance. The Dharejas even plotted to capture Sultan Mahmood Arghun inside the fort, though their plan failed.

### *8. Sufi-led Religious Forces*

Figures such as Makhdoom Bilal rejected Arghun dominance and inspired the local populace to rise against foreign rule.

**Causes of Failure**

- Internal disunity among the Sindhi tribes.
- Absence of a centralized, organized army.

- Betrayal by certain local elites, notably Qazi Qadan, who sided with the invaders.

## Conclusion

Against Shah Beg Arghun, the Sindhi tribes — **Samma, Sodha, Sahta, Machhi, Dher, Dhareja, and Mehr** — fought relentlessly. Alongside them, **Doolah Darya Khan, his sons, and Sufi leaders** stood as emblems of resistance.

# Sindh Rani and Mir Bago Khan Talpur:

# A Unique Tale of Power, Love, and Sacrifice

**Ruk Sindhi**

The history of Sindh is not merely about the rise and fall of dynasties, but also about tales of love, politics, and sacrifice. Among these timeless stories stands the poignant saga of *“Sindh Rani Maryam Adhijo alias Sonita”* and *Mir Bago Khan Talpur*, a tale that proves love can be far greater than power.

## *Birth of Sindh Rani*

Sindh Rani’s real name was *Maryam*, daughter of Chakar Adhijo and sister of Saeendo. She was born around 1180 Hijri near the village of Thari, in present-day Matli taluka. Known for her extraordinary beauty, she was affectionately called *Sonita* and later *Sindh Rani*.

## *Desire of the Kalhora Rulers*

The first to fall for her charm was Kalhora ruler Mian Sarfaraz Khan, who arranged her engagement. However, due to her young age, the marriage never took place. Later, both Mian Ghulam Nabi and Mian Abdul Nabi Kalhora expressed similar desires. When her father refused repeatedly, Mian Abdul Nabi attacked

their village, killing Chakar Adhijo and over a hundred innocent people.

## *Rise of the Talpurs*

In 1783, after the decisive Battle of Halani, the Talpurs took power in Sindh. Sindh Rani came into their custody, and many Talpur nobles sought her hand in marriage. A consensus was reached: whoever renounced power could marry her. Mir Bago Khan declared:
**“I want Sindh Rani, not the throne.”**

## *Married Life of Mir Bago Khan and Sindh Rani*

Mir Fateh Ali Khan Talpur solemnized the marriage. As a wedding gift, he decreed that Mir Bago Khan should dig a canal on the Phuleli River, and the lands irrigated by it would belong to Sindh Rani. True to his word, Mir Bago Khan abandoned wealth and power, dug the “Bago Wah” canal, and founded the town of *Tando Bago*, which today is a major city in Badin district.

## *Death of Sindh Rani*

In 1790, Sindh Rani passed away. According to her will, she was buried near Thari, in the graveyard of Sufi saint Sultan Shah Dewano.

## *Tragic Death of Mir Bago Khan*

In 1804, while hunting near Mehrano, Mir Bago Khan was bitten by a poisonous snake and died. Later, he came to be venerated as *Wagho Faqir*, and his shrine in Umerkot remains a place of pilgrimage.

## *Analysis*

The story of Sindh Rani and Mir Bago Khan illustrates that in Sindh's history, love and human dignity often outweighed political power. Mir Bago Khan's declaration:
**"I desire Sindh Rani, not power"** remains a timeless symbol of love's triumph over the throne.

# When Two Brothers of the Arghun Ruler Fell at the Hands of Sindhis

## Ruk Sindhi

The history of Sindh is marked by periods of glory and devastation, unity and disunity, resistance and subjugation. Among its most turbulent epochs stands the era of the **Arghuns and Tarkhans**, remembered for oppression, internecine conflicts, and the weakening of Sindh’s political cohesion. Yet, in this atmosphere of turmoil, the resilience of Sindhi tribes carved episodes of defiance that continue to echo through history.

## The Division of Sindh

The turning point came with the death of **Mirza Shah Hasan Arghun** in 1555. With his demise, Sindh was split into two political centers: **Thatta**, where **Mirza Isa Tarkhan** consolidated power, and **Bukkur**, which fell under the dominion of **Sultan Mahmood Bukhari**. This fragmentation marked the beginning of a prolonged era of instability, wherein rival

powers vied for supremacy over the land of Sindh.

Sultan Mahmood Bukhari, originally from **Khuzestan in Iran**, had journeyed east as a young man to join **Shah Beg Arghun's army**. Rising in rank, he was eventually appointed as governor of Bukkur. Though a loyal supporter of the Arghun dynasty during Shah Hasan's reign, Mahmood declared independence upon his patron's death, staking his claim as ruler of Bukkur.

## Enduring Hostility with the Tarkhans

The rivalry between **Isa Tarkhan of Thatta** and **Mahmood Bukhari of Bukkur** defined much of this period. Both rulers sought to expand their dominion, and repeated clashes ensued. Yet neither side could decisively overpower the other. The standoff rendered Sindh a fractured land, perpetually at the brink of conflict.

## The Defiance of Sindhi Tribes

Amid these power struggles, it was not the Tarkhans or Arghuns who left the

deepest mark, but rather the **Sindhi tribes** who resisted both with remarkable determination. The **Dahars, Dharejas, Machhis**, and other clans, bound by a common will to preserve their autonomy, struck repeatedly against the forces of Mahmood Bukhari.

In one particularly fierce encounter, their resistance culminated in a historic triumph: **Baba Ahmad and Abdul Fattah**, the two brothers of Sultan Mahmood, were slain in battle. This moment was more than a military victory—it was a symbolic blow against tyranny, immortalizing the courage and resilience of the Sindhi people.

## The Closing Years of Sultan Mahmood

Despite this heavy loss, Sultan Mahmood Bukhari continued his attempts to maintain control over Bukkur and Mathila. Yet his reign was marked less by peace or prosperity than by **unceasing wars and conflicts**. He remained entangled in hostilities until his death on **May 30, 1574**, at the remarkable age of 84.

History remembers Mahmood not for administrative achievements or just governance, but for the **unyielding resistance of Sindh’s people** during his rule. The legacy of this era thus belongs not to the Arghun or Tarkhan rulers, but to the Sindhi tribes whose defiance ensured that the spirit of freedom was never extinguished.

# How Raja Porus Forced Alexander the Great to Retreat from Sindh

**Ruk Sindhi**

## Introduction

Alexander the Great is remembered among the greatest conquerors of

history. Yet, when he entered the Indus Valley, he faced such fierce resistance that he was forced into retreat. The freedom-loving people of Sindh and warriors like Raja Porus proved that this land could never be fully subdued.

## Alexander and His Dream of World Conquest

Born in 356 BCE in Macedonia, Alexander ascended the throne after the death of his father Philip II (336 BCE). A student of Aristotle, his passion was not learning but conquest. After subjugating Iran, Egypt, Syria, and Afghanistan, he advanced towards Sindh.

## Political and Economic Importance of Sindh

Ancient Sindh comprised five major states:

1. Alor – ruled by Raja Musikanmos
2. Siwistan – ruled by Raja Sambus

3. Patala (modern Hyderabad and Lār) – ruled by Raja Mokris
4. Bimbakta (Karachi and Lasbela) – under the Oretan tribe
5. Samanagar (Thatta and Sujawal) – ruled by Raja Sambus of the Yadava clan

Sindh was called the "House of Gold." The port of Bhambore was a major hub of international trade connecting to Alexandria in Egypt.

## Clash of Raja Porus and Alexander

In 326 BCE, Alexander encountered Raja Porus near the Indus. Porus commanded tens of thousands of soldiers, cavalry, and 200 war elephants. Greek historians note that Porus’s archers used giant bows and long arrows capable of piercing even strong shields.

Plutarch writes:

"In the battle against Porus, Alexander’s army lost heart. It was not a victory, but a great defeat."

Eventually, Alexander was forced to recognize Porus as king with honor.

## Resistance of Sindh’s People

Even after Porus, the resistance in Sindh continued:

- The Greek garrison at Alor was burned.
- At Siwistan, leaders declared: *“Better to die in battle than to submit.”*
- At Patala, Alexander’s army was expelled.
- Fierce battles were fought in Thatta and Karachi.

Arrian records that though less armed, the Sindhi people were fearless and ready to die for their homeland.

## Alexander’s Retreat

Exhausted by the people’s resistance, disease, and fatigue, Alexander was forced to halt further conquest. He retreated through the harsh Makran route back to Babylon, where he died in 323 BCE at the age of 33.

H. T. Lambrick remarks:

“Alexander’s campaign in Sindh was no triumph, but a blood-stained disaster.”

## Conclusion

The resistance of Raja Porus and the people of Sindh proved that freedom cannot be shackled. Even Greek historians admitted that the Sindhi people were unmatched in courage, valor, and love for their homeland.

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# About the Author

**Ruk Sindhi** is a historian, researcher, and writer dedicated to exploring the cultural and political heritage of Sindh. With a passion for uncovering hidden narratives, his work bridges academic rigor with storytelling that resonates deeply with general readers.

Drawing from archival sources, oral traditions, and field research, Ruk Sindhi has written extensively on Sindh's past—its rulers, poets, and people—revealing the civilizational depth often overlooked in mainstream history.

*The Soul of Sindh* is his latest contribution, a labor of love that aims to reconnect present generations with their ancestral identity and historical pride.

# Weaponizing Water: The Indus River Under Threat


# Ruk Sindhi



## Abstract

India’s recent political rhetoric threatening to halt the flow of the Indus River into Pakistan marks a dangerous precedent in transboundary water politics. This article explores the legal, environmental, and civilizational implications of such threats, arguing that weaponizing water undermines regional stability, ecological integrity, and centuries-old cultural heritage.


## Introduction

In April 2023, India unilaterally suspended the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT), a move that sparked alarm across South Asia. The statement by Indian Water Resources Minister Chandrakant Patil—“Not a single drop of Indus water will reach Pakistan”—echoes Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s earlier threats to disregard the treaty. These declarations are

not merely political posturing; they represent a grave violation of international law and a potential ecological catastrophe.

## Legal Framework and Treaty Violation

The Indus Waters Treaty, brokered by the World Bank in 1960, remains one of the most successful water-sharing agreements globally. It allocates the eastern rivers (Ravi, Beas, Sutlej) to India and the western rivers (Indus, Jhelum, Chenab) to Pakistan (Afzal, 2021). The treaty's unilateral suspension violates the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, which prohibits parties from withdrawing without mutual consent (Ali & Khuhro, 2021).

## Environmental Consequences

If India were to restrict the flow of the Indus River, Pakistan would face severe ecological degradation:

- Agricultural lands would become barren due to water scarcity
- Mangrove forests in Sindh would collapse, affecting biodiversity
- Groundwater levels would plummet, increasing salinity and desertification

- Millions could be displaced, becoming environmental refugees (Ali & Khuhro, 2021)

The Indus River is not merely a watercourse; it is a living ecological system stretching from the Himalayas to the Arabian Sea. Its disruption would destabilize the entire region's environmental balance.

## Cultural and Civilizational Impact

The Indus River is the cradle of one of the world's oldest civilizations. Archaeologists like Sir John Marshall and Mortimer Wheeler have documented its role in shaping the Indus Valley Civilization, predating even the Mauryan Empire (Marshall, 1931; Wheeler, 1959). Scholars such as Wendy Doniger argue that Vedic traditions were influenced by the Sindhu culture, not the other way around (Doniger, 2009).

To weaponize the river is to assault a shared cultural legacy. As Robert Macfarlane writes, "If we see rivers as alive, our relationship with the world transforms" (Macfarlane, 2017). Similarly, James C. Scott and Mustansar Hussain Tarar have portrayed rivers as agents of civilization, not mere resources (Scott, 2020; Tarar, 2001).

## Conclusion

The Indus River is not just a geopolitical asset—it is a lifeline, a cultural archive, and an ecological artery. South Asia must move from confrontation to cooperation, recognizing rivers as shared heritage rather than instruments of revenge. Let the rivers flow, for in their current lies the continuity of life, culture, and peace.

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# The Mauryan Dynasty and Sindh — History, Culture, and the Influence of Buddhism

## Introduction

The rise of the Mauryan dynasty marked a pivotal shift in the political, religious, and cultural history of the Indian subcontinent. From Chandragupta Maurya to Emperor Ashoka, this dynasty not only ruled Magadha but extended its influence to the Indus Valley. In Sindh’s historical consciousness, the Mauryan era is significant for the spread of

Buddhism, the decline of Greek influence, and the continuity of local governance (Panhwar, 2007).

## Chandragupta Maurya: Founder of the Empire

Educated in Taxila, Chandragupta overthrew the Nanda dynasty around 322 BCE and established a centralized empire. His advisor Chanakya, a scholar and strategist familiar with Sindh, played a key role in stabilizing the realm (Limbark, 1982).
The empire stretched westward to Herat, with Pataliputra (modern Patna) as its capital. The political vacuum following Alexander's death, unrest among Sindhi tribes, and the fragmentation of Greek command created favorable conditions for Chandragupta's rise (Panhwar, 2007).

## Decline of Greek Influence

After Alexander's death in 323 BCE, Greek forces in Sindh fell into disarray. Nearchus fled by sea, while commanders like Philip were assassinated. With support from Raja Porus, Chandragupta defeated the Greeks and forged a diplomatic alliance with Seleucus. Thus, Greek and Persian influence waned, and Sindh became part of the Mauryan Empire (Limbark, 1982).

## Ashoka the Great: Propagation of Buddhism

Ashoka, Chandragupta's grandson, ascended the throne around 273 BCE and became a devoted follower of Buddhism. His empire expanded to Afghanistan, Sindh, Swat, and Nepal. He issued 14 edicts inscribed in Brahmi and Kharosthi scripts, many of which survive today (Panhwar, 2007).
Among his emissaries, Upagupta spent considerable time in Sindh, educating people on moral law and overseeing the construction of stupas and monasteries. Although no Ashokan edict has been found in Sindh, his religious influence is evident (Cousens, 1892).

## Buddhist Influence in Sindh

During the Mauryan period, Sindh became a center for Buddhist expansion. Ashoka's emissaries initiated religious architecture, including stupas and monasteries. According to M.H. Panhwar, local governance remained in Sindhi hands, while governors were appointed periodically (Panhwar, 2007).
Henry Cousens, in *The Antiquities of Sindh*, mentions Buddhist structures from Ashoka's era. Cultural remnants like the town of Moro, the Maurya caste, and the festival of "Chand Moriyo" reflect the enduring legacy of this period (Cousens, 1892).

## Conclusion

The Mauryan era in Sindh represents a chapter of political autonomy, religious transformation, and cultural evolution. From Chandragupta's

expulsion of Greek forces to Ashoka's Buddhist mission, Sindh not only absorbed these influences but integrated them into its historical identity.

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# Shiva Temple of Jham: A Historical and Cultural Review

## Abstract


The Shiva temple of Jham Kot (also known as Ham Kot) is a significant center of ancient

Shaivism in Sindh, deeply connected to the Indus Valley Civilization. This article explores the temple's historical background, archaeological evidence, and the continuity of ritual practices.

## Introduction

Sindh has long been a cradle of religions and traditions. The Shiva temple located near the main gate on the southeastern edge of Jham Kot stands as a living testament to this continuity (Khan, 2007).

## Historical Background

According to *Tuhfat al-Kiram* and other historical sources, worship of Shiva and the lingam has been practiced here for centuries (Qureshi, 1992).
A seal from the Indus Valley depicts Shiva as "Pashupati," the lord of animals (Marshall, 1931). The bull (Nandi) symbolized agrarian prosperity (Possehl, 2002), indicating that lingam worship existed even during the Indus Civilization.

## Shaivism in South Asia

Although the Rigveda does not mention Shiva as a deity, it does refer to a "Shiva" tribe settled near the Indus River (Macdonell & Keith, 1912). Scholars believe that Shaivism originated in Sindh (Flood, 1996). Over time,

Shiva came to be seen as a creator, destroyer, and healer (Gonda, 1977).

## Continuity of Rituals at Jham Temple

Shiva is primarily worshipped through the symbolic union of the lingam and yoni (Parvati). This practice continues at Jham temple to this day (Sheikh, 2015).
The temple is built of red stone, resembling Jain temples of Nagarparkar. However, modern cement and paintwork have altered its original appearance (Khan, 2007).
The temple once housed a small idol, a Shiva lingam, and a 9-inch statue of Ganesha, which was later immersed in Kinjhar Lake (Ansari, 2011).

## Geographical and Cultural Context

Historically, the temple stood near the riverbank. Even today, waves from Kinjhar Lake touch its steps. In front of the temple are bathing areas for pilgrims, tiled with slabs from Kashi (Sheikh, 2015).

## Conclusion

The Shiva temple of Jham is a vital heritage site reflecting the antiquity and continuity of Shaivism in Sindh. It bridges the Indus Civilization with later Hindu religious traditions.

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# Mangrove Forests in Sindh — Ecological and Socioeconomic Significance


## Abstract

Sindh’s mangrove forests are a vital ecological resource that support marine biodiversity, protect coastal zones, and provide livelihoods for local communities. These forests are primarily concentrated along both banks of the Indus River and in the Indus Delta (IUCN, 2009). Despite their importance, they face serious threats from industrial pollution, deforestation, reduced river flows, and rising sea levels. This article examines their historical context, ecological role, current threats, and policy recommendations for conservation.


## Introduction

Mangrove forests (locally known as tamar forests) are a unique natural feature of Sindh, especially found in the Indus River’s deltaic region (Memon, 2005). The minerals and silt carried by the river are crucial for their growth, making these forests ideal habitats for biodiversity.

## Ecological Importance

Mangroves serve as natural nurseries for juvenile fish, shrimp, and crabs (Saifullah, 1997). Their root networks stabilize soil and prevent erosion of coastlines (Kathiresan & Bingham, 2001). They not only produce oxygen but also absorb carbon, playing a key role in maintaining the planet's ecological balance (Alongi, 2002).

## Historical Background

British-era records indicate that the Indus Delta once hosted vast mangrove forests, where river flows discharged into the sea near Karachi (Harrison, 1947). In 1966, Pakistan had approximately 486,249 hectares of mangroves, mostly concentrated in Sindh (IUCN, 2009).

## Threats

- **Industrial Pollution:** Toxic waste from leather, steel, and oil refineries along Karachi's coast—including chromium and hydrocarbons—poses severe risks to mangroves (Qureshi, 2010).
- **Water Scarcity:** Downstream flow from Kotri Barrage has declined from 150 million acre-feet in 1892 to just 10 million acre-feet today (IUCN, 2009).
- **Overuse:** Local communities consume approximately 173 kilograms of wood monthly, mostly sourced from mangroves (Memon, 2005).

- **Sea Level Rise:** Experts estimate that nearly 80 acres of land are eroded daily in Thatta and Badin due to rising sea levels (IUCN, 2009).

## Socioeconomic Importance

Mangroves provide nurseries for fisheries, shield coastal settlements from storms, and supply wood, fuel, and boat-building materials to local communities (Saifullah, 1997).

## Recommendations

- Large-scale reforestation
- Guaranteed downstream water flow from Kotri Barrage
- Pollution control through industrial treatment plants
- Community-based forest management
- Inclusion of mangrove protection in national climate policy

## Conclusion

Sindh’s mangrove forests are not only ecological assets but also natural defense systems against marine disasters. Their degradation threatens both biodiversity and local economies, demanding urgent and practical conservation measures.

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# Sahib Mahal — An Architectural and Historical Review

## Abstract

Sahib Mahal, located in Tando Bago (District Badin), is a remarkable architectural structure built by Mir Khuda Bakhsh Talpur around 1947 in memory of his wife, Sahib Khatoon. The palace stands out not only for its design but also for its association with feudal social status, domestic life, and cultural values. This article presents an academic review of its historical background, architectural features, and current condition.

## Introduction

Palaces in Sindh’s cultural heritage are more than residences—they are expressions of power, prestige, and aesthetic sensibility (Asher, 1992). Sahib Mahal in Tando Bago is one such heritage site, notable for its architectural elegance and social significance.

## Historical Background

Mir Khuda Bakhsh Talpur, a prominent landlord of Badin district, owned approximately 30,000 acres of agricultural land (Shaikh, 2010). Known as “Mir Lambat,” he built the palace in memory of his wife, Sahib Khatoon, daughter of his friend Bacho Khan Korai. Inside the palace lies the grave of their young daughter, who passed away in 1950 (Qureshi, 2015).

## Architectural Features

Sahib Mahal is a three-story structure reflecting Islamic, local, and colonial architectural influences (Khan, 2001).

- **Domes and Arches:** Each corner features eight-sided domes, and there are eight paired arches.
- **Interior Design:** Wooden doors with colored glass, tiled flooring, and verandas enhance its aesthetic appeal.
- **Garden and Recreation:** A garden modeled after Shalimar Bagh once surrounded the palace; though now vanished, the water pond and recreational pavilion still exist (Memon, 2018).
- **Third Floor:** The upper level includes viewing chambers and a roof adorned with red crescent and star motifs.

## Social and Cultural Significance

Palaces in Sindh symbolize feudal authority, taste, and domestic culture (Lari, 1996). Sahib Mahal is not only a personal memorial but also a reflection of Sindh’s feudal domestic life and cultural traditions.

## Current Condition

Currently, Sahib Mahal is owned by Mir Abu Bakar Khan Talpur, who resides there with his family. While the structure remains intact, the garden and some sections have deteriorated due to neglect (Sindh Culture Dept., 2020).

## Conclusion

Sahib Mahal is a prominent example of Sindh's feudal society and architectural heritage. Its preservation requires serious efforts at both governmental and local levels. Maintaining this site is vital not only for regional heritage but also for potential inclusion in global cultural heritage listings.

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# Ghazala Rafique — A Renowned Artist of Radio, TV, Film, and Stage


## Abstract

Ghazala Rafique (1939–1977) was a distinguished figure in Sindhi and Urdu literature, music, drama, and film. Her artistic versatility spanned radio, television, stage, and cinema. This article presents an academic review of her life, creative journey, and contributions.


## Introduction

Pakistan’s artistic and literary landscape has been shaped by many iconic personalities, among whom Ghazala Rafique holds a prominent place. Through her work, she played a vital role in enriching Sindhi and Urdu dramatic traditions (Ansari, 2005).

## Early Life

Born in 1939 in Qambar Ali Khan, District Qambar Shahdadkot, her birth name was Bilquis. She was raised in the home of Ghulam Nauman Ansari, while her father, Usman Ali Ansari, was a renowned writer, scholar, and researcher (Shaikh, 2010). Influenced by a literary environment, she began writing short stories in her youth, which were published in

newspapers and magazines of the time (Memon, 2014).

## Musical Training and Radio Debut

Ghazala received musical training from Ustad Amrao Bandu Khan and Master Muhammad Ibrahim. Z. A. Bukhari introduced her to Radio Pakistan in 1957, where she performed under the name Bilquis Ansari (Qureshi, 2016). Her first hosting role was in the program *Lipton Ki Mehfil*, followed by popular shows like *Subah Dam*, *Darwaza*, *Khawar Khula*, *Subah-e-Nau*, and *Itwaar Ke Itwaar* (Shaikh, 2010).

## Radio and Television Contributions

Her first radio drama was *Aag*, written by Syed Ahmed Rifat and produced by Shamsuddin Butt (Memon, 2014).
She was introduced to television by Abdul Karim Baloch in the Sindhi program *Paras*.
Her debut TV drama *Mirza Ghalib* earned her a PTV Award for her role as a singer (Qureshi, 2016).

- **Urdu Dramas:** *Aakhri Mom Batti*, *Pat Jhar Ke Baad*, *Pirana*, *Chautha Station*
- **Sindhi Dramas:** *Umar Marvi*, *Noori Jam Tamachi*, *Sassi Punhu*, *Leela Chanesar*, *Dozakh*

## Film Career

She played the role of singer Qurban Jelani's mother in the Sindhi film *Rat Ja Rishta*, a performance remembered as one of her finest (Ansari, 2005).

## Personal Life and Death

She married Chaudhry Rafique in 1964 and had one son and two daughters. Ghazala passed away from a heart attack on 24 January 1977 at the age of 38. She was buried in Paposh Nagar Cemetery, Karachi (Shaikh, 2010).

## Conclusion

Ghazala Rafique left a profound impact on the artistic world at a young age. Her contributions to radio, television, film, and stage remain an enduring legacy for Sindhi and Urdu cultural heritage.

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# Pab Mountain — A Historical, Geographical, and Cultural Review

## Introduction

Pab Mountain lies in the southern range of the Halar Hills, approximately eleven miles from Hawks Bay. Its unique shape resembles the sole of a foot, hence the name “Pab” (Laghari, 2007). With an elevation of 5,000 to 6,000 feet, the mountain features striking ridges, valleys, and natural passes.

## Geographical Features

Pab Mountain contains seven major passes: Amri, Paboni, Rahig, Shah Bilawal, Gandbo, Lundki, and Werahib. Among these, three hold historical and commercial significance (Bhutto,

1999). The region is rich in wild flora and fruits such as figs, berries, and wild dates.

## Historical Significance

Historically, Baloch tribes used these passes to invade Sindh, and trade routes to Debal also passed through here (Khati, 1982).

- **Alexander the Great:** During his return from India (356–323 BCE), he crossed Pab Mountain. Graves and stone markers of fallen soldiers still exist (Altaf, 1975).
- **Muhammad bin Qasim:** His infantry crossed Pab during the conquest of Debal (695–717 CE) (Shaikh, 1990).
- **Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai:** On his pilgrimage to Hinglaj (1689–1752 CE), he traversed Pab and referenced it repeatedly in his poetry, e.g., “If you are the rock of Pab, then my limbs are iron” (Bhittai, 1752/2009).

## Cultural and Literary Importance

Pab Mountain gained literary prominence through Shah Latif’s *Risalo*. His tale of Sassui and Punhun immortalized the mountain in Sindhi culture and literature (Jamali, 2011).

## Commercial and Economic Role

The Paboni pass was historically known as “Balochistan’s trade route.” Goods like wool, rice, cotton, dates, and honey were transported

to Karachi markets through this route (Soomro, 1986).

## Tourism and Biodiversity

Shah Bilawal and Gandbo passes are popular for tourism and hunting. Natural springs, caves, and gardens enhance the region's appeal. Wildlife includes falcons, peacocks, deer, leopards, and bears. Fertile soil and water availability support agriculture (Mughiz, 2001).

## Conclusion

Pab Mountain stands as one of Sindh's most significant natural landmarks due to its geographical location, historical depth, trade routes, literary symbolism, and ecological diversity. Though its former glory has faded, it remains a living testament to Sindh's cultural and historical heritage.

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# Patan Minara — A Historical Site of Ancient Sindh

## Introduction

Among the ancient archaeological sites of Sindh, Patan Minara stands out for its historical, religious, and cultural significance. Located approximately five kilometers east of Rahim Yar Khan, along a dried channel of the Indus River, the site features mounds spread

across several miles, bearing witness to the evolution of Sindh’s ancient civilization (Machan, 1870).

## Historical Background

Patan Minara is believed to have been a Buddhist monastery. Tradition holds that the complex consisted of five towers: a central square tower surrounded by four smaller ones. Over time, some towers collapsed. In 1740, Bhadr Khan Halani demolished the central structure, while Fazal Ali Khan Halani dismantled the remaining towers and reused the stones to fortify the forts of Din Garh, Sahib Garh, and Bhagla (Wirya, 1979).

## Archaeological Overview

The surface of Patan Minara reveals broken pottery and brick fragments. During the monsoon season, copper coins and utensils are occasionally unearthed. Although no formal excavation has taken place, preliminary research suggests the site holds considerable importance (Machan, 1870).

Nearby associated sites include:

- **Bhandar:** Located about four miles away, with signs of ancient warehouses.
- **Khokhar Daro:** Five miles away, likely part of the same urban complex.
- **Gate Remains:** Five miles east, marking the city’s entrance.

- **Band Patan:** Three miles away, believed to have served as a prison (Tod, 1829).

## Historical References

Colonel Tod, in his writings, refers to Patan as an ancient city and a seat of power for certain rulers. In the 10th century CE, the Soomra dynasty reestablished the city. After their decline, some Soomras merged into Baloch tribes and later became known as Gorchani (Tod, 1829).

## Religious and Cultural Significance

According to Colonel Machan, an inscription was found at the site in a language resembling Sindhi or Saraiki. Dated between 1559 and 1569 CE, it mentions offerings and dedications to a religious figure or shrine, indicating the site's spiritual importance (Machan, 1870).

## Names and Identity

Historically, Patan was also known as "Patanpur." Records from Akbar's reign confirm this name. Until the 18th century, the city remained active, attracting visitors from Sindh, Bikaner, and Jaisalmer during the "Sho Raatri" festival (Wirya, 1979).

## Conclusion

Patan Minara is a multifaceted heritage site linked to Buddhism, the Soomra dynasty, the

Mughal era, and regional tribal histories. Unfortunately, the site has yet to undergo formal archaeological excavation, which could further illuminate its historical significance.

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# Rohal Ji Kund — A Key Site of the Indus Valley Civilization

## Introduction

The Indus Valley Civilization is one of the oldest in the world, with archaeological traces

still found across Sindh, Balochistan, and Punjab. Among these, *Rohal Ji Kund* is a significant site due to its geographic location, cultural artifacts, and ancient trade connections. Located in Jamshoro District, within the seasonal streambed of Nai Gaj, it is considered part of the Amri cultural horizon (Mughal, 1997).

## Geographic Location

Rohal Ji Kund lies on the left bank of Nai Gaj, which originates in the Kirthar Mountains and flows into Sindh. Though narrow and rugged, this pass is older and more continuously inhabited than others. Nai Gaj forms a large bend locally known as *Tik Jo Kanb*, offering both natural beauty and historical challenges for settlement (Allchin & Allchin, 1982).

## Cultural and Archaeological Significance

Artifacts found at the site—pottery, figurines of bulls and goats, and daily-use tools—closely resemble those of the Amri culture. These findings suggest that Rohal Ji Kund was not only a settlement but also a center for agriculture and trade (Possehl, 2002).

## Local Name and Historical Identity

Locals refer to the site as *Lorh*, while archaeological literature often names it *Rohal Ji Kund*. This dual naming reflects its presence

in oral traditions, regional customs, and historical records (Shaikh, 2004).

## Trade Importance

In ancient times, the Rohal pass served as a vital trade route. Caravans traveled from Sindh to key Balochistan towns like Wad and Nal. The pottery found along this route is classified as *Amri-Nal cultural heritage*, evidencing deep cultural and commercial ties between Sindh and Balochistan (Jarrige, 1991).

## Geographic Challenges

During monsoon season, Nai Gaj becomes dangerously swift, cutting off access entirely. This highlights the environmental challenges faced by ancient inhabitants and their resilience in maintaining settlements (Wright, 2010).

## Conclusion

Rohal Ji Kund is a unique and vital site of the Indus Valley Civilization. Its geographic setting, archaeological remains, and trade connections make it a key location for understanding early phases of Sindh's cultural development. Further excavation and study could reveal even deeper insights into the region's ancient past.

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# Tīrath Dhāra — An Academic Review

## Introduction

Sindh has long been a center of scholarly and cultural inquiry due to its ancient heritage, religious sites, and natural landscapes. Among these historic locations is *Tīrath Dhāra*, situated in the Lakki region (Jamshoro District), known for its hot springs, ancient shrines, caves, and mythological associations. This site

holds significance not only for Hindus but also within local Muslim traditions (Khatri, 1938).

## Historical Background

Tīrath Dhāra lies approximately 2.5 kilometers west of Lakki Shah Saddar railway station, nestled in a valley between mountains. Two hot springs have flowed here since ancient times, frequently mentioned in historical sources (Dani, 1992). Before Partition, a major festival was held here during *Shiv Ratri*, attracting thousands of pilgrims from Sindh and India. After the creation of Pakistan, this tradition ceased. Nevertheless, local people—especially those suffering from leprosy and skin diseases—continue to bathe in the hot waters for healing (Zaidi, 2005).

The site also features a cave of considerable importance, believed to be man-made. Its structure suggests it was used not only for shelter but also for meditation and spiritual retreat (Khan, 2017).

## Religious Significance

In Hinduism, Tīrath Dhāra is considered a sacred site. Ramchand Khatri, in his book *Shri Hinglaj Ji Yatra*, recounts a mythological battle between Shiva Mahadev and Daksha Prajapati, during which Shiva’s wife Uma died (Khatri, 1938). In grief and rage, Shiva scattered Uma’s body across the earth, leading to the establishment of Shakti worship at various locations—Tīrath Dhāra being one of them.

Simultaneously, a local Muslim legend associates the hot spring with Hazrat Ali (A.S.), and mentions Shah Saddar Lakki's spiritual retreat in the area (Qasmi, 2010). Thus, Tīrath Dhāra stands as a symbol of interfaith heritage, revered in both religious traditions.

## Geographical Importance

The hot springs of Tīrath Dhāra are geologically and scientifically significant. The water temperature ranges from 102 to 112°F, making it beneficial for treating skin and other ailments (Khan, 2017). However, due to high sulfur content, the water is not potable, and locals bring drinking water from outside.
The cave also holds anthropological value. Carved into the earth, its engineering suggests that ancient humans possessed advanced skills in construction and habitation (Dani, 1992). Such sites are crucial for understanding Sindh's civilizational and environmental history.

## Conclusion

Tīrath Dhāra is a site where history, religion, and nature converge. Its hot springs, shrines, cave, and legends make it significant not only for spiritual beliefs but also for academic and scientific research. Studying this location deepens our understanding of Sindh's religious diversity, cultural continuity, and natural heritage (Zaidi, 2005; Qasmi, 2010).

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# The Claim of Alauddin Khalji’s Invasion of Sindh: A Historical Reality and Folkloric Analysis


**Ruk Sindhi**

## Introduction

In Sindh's historical consciousness, the tale of Dodo Soomro holds symbolic national significance, wherein the alleged invasion of Sindh by Alauddin Khalji is frequently mentioned. While this claim exists in folk narratives, it lacks substantiated evidence in historical sources. This article analyzes the contradiction between folklore, which portrays Alauddin Khalji as the adversary of Sindh's hero Dodo Soomro, and historical records, which remain silent on such an invasion (Naz, 2014).

## Historical Campaigns of Alauddin Khalji

Alauddin Khalji (r. 1296–1316 CE) was the second ruler of the Delhi Sultanate, known for his military campaigns across various regions of India, including Devagiri, Gujarat, Chittor, Malwa, Warangal, and Madurai (Rahman, n.d.; History Marg, 2023). These campaigns are documented by historians such as Amir Khusrau, Ziauddin Barani, and Isami. However, none of these sources mention an invasion of Sindh (Jackson, 2003).

## The Battle of Siwistan (1298 CE): A Defensive Operation

In 1298 CE, during a Mongol incursion into Siwistan (present-day Sindh), Alauddin Khalji's general Zafar Khan defeated the invaders. This

battle was a defensive maneuver, not an offensive campaign against Sindh (Wikipedia, n.d.). Some accounts mention the presence of Chanesar, a figure linked to Delhi, suggesting regional involvement (Jackson, 2003).

## The Tale of Dodo Chanesar and Folk Consciousness

In Sindhi folklore, the story of Dodo Chanesar is a heroic narrative of sacrifice. It depicts Chanesar conspiring with the Sultan of Delhi to usurp his brother Dodo's throne by inviting an invasion of Sindh. Preserved in the poetic genre of "Gaah," this tale emphasizes moral values such as Dodo's martyrdom, Baghi Bai's wisdom, and Jam Abro's act of offering sanctuary ("Saam") to Sindhi women (Doctor, 1985; Sindhi Wikipedia, n.d.).

## Historical Confusion and the Possible Link to Tarmashirin

Some researchers suggest that the "Alauddin" mentioned in Sindhi folklore may actually refer to Tarmashirin Khan, a Chagatai ruler who invaded India around 1327 CE. After converting to Islam, he adopted the title "Alauddin," and is mentioned in Ibn Battuta's travelogue (Jackson, 2003). However, Tarmashirin's campaigns occurred after Dodo Soomro's martyrdom in 1300 CE, making this identification historically inaccurate.

## Historical Silence and Folk Memory

Primary sources such as Amir Khusrau's *Khazain-ul-Futuh*, Barani's *Tarikh-i-Firoz Shahi*, and Isami's *Futuh-us-Salatin* do not mention any invasion of Sindh by Alauddin Khalji. The lack of reliable chronology for the Soomra dynasty further complicates the matter. While folklore suggests a Delhi-based ruler attacked Sindh during the Soomra period, the exact identity and date remain uncertain. The martyrdom of Dodo Soomro, Baghi Bai's role, and the sanctuary offered by the rulers of Kach are not mere myths—they warrant deeper investigation.

## Conclusion

Although there is no historical evidence of Alauddin Khalji's invasion of Sindh, the presence of this narrative in folk literature reflects Sindh's national consciousness, patriotism, and moral values. Alongside historical inquiry, it is essential to understand the symbolic importance of folklore, as it embodies the emotional identity and collective memory of a people.

## References

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